

AMENDMENT TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace paragraph [0004] with the following amended paragraph:

[0004] Two telecommunication media that have proliferated in recent years are the Internet and the networks used for cable television. Cable television networks often use coaxial cable to carry broadband radio frequency signals between a hub and a number of customer homes, and optical fibers to carry optical signals between the hub and a "head end"; these networks are sometimes referred to as broadband networks or "hybrid fiber coax" (HFC) networks. These networks have been equipped with the capability of upstream and downstream digital data communications to facilitate remote programming and control of customer cable boxes, customer selection of programming, and the like. Cable television providers have begun to adapt their networks so that their customers can access the Internet through a cable modem connected to the coaxial cable that brings cable television signals to the customers. ~~As will be described more fully with respect to Fig. 1, prior~~ Prior art systems for providing Internet access through a cable television network include a cable modem (or "CM") at the customer's premises that interfaces data processing equipment, such as a computer, to the cable television coaxial cable. A device typically located at a cable head end sends signals to and receives signals from digital data signals with a number of cable modems and interfaces such signals to an Internet Protocol (IP) network. That device may be referred to as a "Cable Modem Termination System" or "CMTS"; if provided with router functionality, such a device may be referred to as a Cable Modem Termination System/Edge Router" or "CMTS/ER". A cable company's HFC network may include a number of CMTS/ERs, each of which serves a different group of customers.